

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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9-1-1 Is the Only Emergency Number in Washington State

An unmarked police car with a red flashing light pulls up behind a lone woman in a car that has moved off to the side of the road. The woman is frightened and remembers her parents telling her to never pull over for an unmarked car unless it is in a safe place. The woman dials a special “* phone number” to speak with a police dispatcher to confirm it is an official police car. The dispatcher informs the woman there are no police cars in the area and immediately sends back up. Within 10 minutes four police cars surround her and the unmarked car. They discover the driver of the unmarked car is a convicted rapist with a gun who is wanted for other crimes.

You may have heard about this story or received an e-mail from a friend through chain mail describing this story. Don't believe it. It is not real nor is it valid in Washington state. The only number to call in Washington for a life-threatening emergency is 9-1-1.

Because some states in the country do not yet have 9-1-1 implemented, they promote a number other than 9-1-1 to call for emergencies. Many states use a special “* phone number” to contact their state patrol. This is not the case in Washington.

If you have a concern about the identity of a police officer, call 9-1-1. Dispatchers track the status and locations of their police officers.

Remember the only emergency phone number to call in Washington is 9-1-1.
